At the head of the executive branch of government, 631. 648
subject, of course, to legislative or royal check, are the
inisters, from whose various departments all public officers
re appointed. Following in general the old Ottoman lines,
he country is divided into fourteen livas, each under a
utesserif. The liva is subdivided into qadhas, each under
qaimmaqam. The qadha is in turn subdivided into a number
f nahiyas, each under a mudir. Large towns have a reis
elediya appointed by the government whose office is respon-
ible for the intricacies of metropolitan administration.
he people have a mukhtar, selected from the local in- [622]
abitants, who, while in no sense a public official, acts
s liason between his fellows and the mudir, a role exactly
omparable to that of the 'umda in contemporary Egypt.[1]

The qadha or district of Rowanduz belongs to the 631
rbil liva, and is subdivided into five nahiyas. The
edentary population of these, as well as the number of 162
illages, is listed here for 1950, as furnished by the 361
ensus officer of Rowanduz. In spite of this official's
bors in reducing a difficult problem, it is necessary to
egard these figures with some reservation, for the Kurds, [182]
ike many of their contemporaries in the Middle East and
ike the Israelites of old, regard inquiries into their
umbers with the strongest suspicion. Similarly, the
villages" here referred to may vary from a few isolated

[1] Ayrout, 1945, pp. 47-48.

Unlike many Kurdish and Nestorian villagers, as well as the people of Rowandux itself, the kuchik all belong to one or another "tribe" (Kurdish, 'eshireh, from Arabic, 'eshira), a matter which also demands clarification. The typical Kurdish tribe contains several elements of a different character. Membership usually depends upon descent, but individual families or much larger groups can deny their tribal allegiance, and either join another group, or form an individual tribe of their own. While some of the larger confederations appear to be of considerable antiquity, the smaller groups come and go with the vicissitudes of war, wealth, and leadership. Nor are the tribes made up exclusively of nomads, for, while the nomad may play a dominant role in furnishing pugnacious leadership and armed men, the wealth and numerical strength of such a group come largely from its villagers. Because many of the chieftains are landowners, persons living in villages owned by them, whether Muslim Kurds or Nestorian Christians, are said to "belong" to the chieftain's tribe. Nestorians often dress in the typical garb of their "tribe," taking part in many of its common affairs, although there is almost no possibility of intermarriage between them and their Muslim fellows. While there seems to be little historical evidence to support or refute such a view, the Kurdish tribe appears to represent an intermediate stage between groups whose membership was actually based on descent and those whose character is purely feudal, a situation which may have

existed for centuries. Today it cannot be denied that some tribesmen, particularly the Ketchir, belong to their group because of kinship relation (the Kurdish term tayfa, from Arabic, ta'ifa, "tribe," is used to describe a tribal subdivision still to be found which seems to represent a patrilineal clan), while at the same time it is perfectly clear that a great deal of membership is simply territorial.

It is important to notice that there are two main bodies of criminal law in Iraq, a civil code administered by judges appointed by the Ministry of Justice, and that commonly called "tribal law," executed by local administrative officers. The institution of dual legal systems was evoked by the existence of Arab and Kurdish tribes some of whose time-honored customs were, to say the least, out of joint with the provisions of a modern, quasi-European code. The differences between the two need not be considered in detail. In general, "tribal" law is more lenient in some respects, as in "justifiable" homicide (disposing of an erring female relative), and more stringent in others, such as adultery or rape. There are in the Rowandus district a number of groups who can have recourse to tribal law, and its administration is not charged to the local judge, but is an added task of the qaimmaqam. Hence the office of that official in Rowandus has often the aspect of a courtroom, the qaimmaqam and his clerk patiently and laboriously inquiring into the intricacies of some rural feud through an interminable parade of witnesses--coarsely-dressed

3: Barth E-5 (1951) 1954 MA11 Kurd MA11



and in the same area possibly also among some Caucasian groups.[4] However, though marriage patterns do not function to define the relations between lineages, this does not assume that marriage relations and maternal ties have indeed no relevance of a structural or specifically political nature. The present paper presents an hypothesis regarding these implications in the Kurdish lineage organization, specifically the meaning of a pattern of father's brother's daughter marriage, for the consideration of students working with similar problems in the Middle East.

Features of Kurdish culture and society have been described elsewhere,[5] but might be summarized briefly. The Kurds are a linguistic and ethnic group, nearly exclusively Moslem by religion, totalling some three million people.[6] They occupy a semi-continuous territory along the hills and mountains east and north of the Fertile Crescent, divided between the modern states of Persia, Iraq, Turkey, the U.S.S.R., and Syria. Some few groups of Kurds have remained nomadic till the present day, following their herds of sheep, goats, and large cattle into the mountains in the summer and down on the plains in the winter. The great majority are today subsistence farmers, many of whom practice a pattern of localized transhumance. The present discussion relates to the southern districts of Iraq Kurdistan, where material was collected in the field from February to August, 1951.

Two basic types of organization were found: a tribal system, based on descent, and a feudal system, based on class and land ownership. The latter is progressively becoming assimilated into the modern structure of the state of Iraq; the former, a patrilineal lineage system, survives only among the nomads and a minority of the farmers in the more isolated territories.

Kurdish tribal organization is a segmentary lineage organization of very simple type. The largest kinship unit, the *tira*, is a maximal lineage, divisible into segments according to the charter of patrilineal descent. The genealogical depth of the *tira* varies. For the sedentary Hamawands (location: Kirkuk Liwa, Iraq), the apical ancestor is nine generations removed from the present adult generation; for the nomadic Warda Shuni (location: roaming in Sulaimani Liwa, Iraq), twelve generations.

Several *tira* may be united, though not necessarily, in a political confederacy of variable endurance, the most important in southern Kurdistan being at present

4 Louis J. Luzbetak, *Marriage and the Family in Caucasia* (Vienna, 1951).

5 V. F. Minorsky, "Kurds and Kurdistan" (in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, London, 1913); E. R. Leach, *Social and Economic Organization of the Rowanduz Kurds* (Monographs in Social Anthropology, no. 3, London, 1940); Frederik Barth, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan* (Universitetets Etnografiske Museum, Bulletin no. 7, Oslo, 1953).

6 *The Middle East* (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1950).

3: Barth E-5 (1951) 1954 MA11 Kurd MA11
Jordan MG1



daughter marriage serves to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system.

If this view is generally correct, one would expect to find a high frequency of father's brother's daughter marriage associated with a developed lineage organization in the Middle East, and the frequencies to be appreciably lower in villages with a different type of organization. In the southern Kurdish area, this is clearly so: for other areas, the literature gives no conclusive evidence.

In the southern Kurdish feudally organized territory, neighbouring on the above discussed Hawrawnd territory, the comparative picture might be summarized as follows: (1) The expressed norms are modified, though not basically changed. First rights of parental cousins are not as strongly emphasized, and the ideal of equality between spouses tends to be interpreted in terms of village endogamy rather than with reference to descent group. (2) Brideprice used to be lower for all categories of husbands, especially those of the local community (this holds true for the villagers, not for the larger towns, where great variations in class and wealth intervene); some villages have made formal agreements that no brideprice should be charged within the village unit. An alternative and moderately popular way of avoiding brideprice is the sister exchange between two indifferently related men. (3) The actual frequency of father's brother's daughter marriage clearly drops, while village endogamy (in villages generally larger than those with a lineage organization) remains high. A complete census of marriages in one such non-tribal village may serve as an example:

| Fa and Mo | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FaBrDa (ammou) | MoBrDa (khalouse) | SiDa (gurse) | Other relative | Unrelated, in village | Other village | Total |
| 6 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 19 | 10 | 46 |

This picture would seem to be consistent with the views expressed above.

Hilma Granqvist[10] gives some comparable material from an Arab village in Palestine, where the local community is divided into patrilineal descent groups, called clans, apparently of a segmentary type; but where several of these descent groups reside together in a large village, and have no wider political or territorial importance. She offers the following frequencies of degree of relationship between spouses in one village:[11]

10 Hilma Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village* (Helsingfors, 1931).
11 Idem, pp. 81, 92, 194-195.

5: Edmonds G-5 (1923, 1945) 1957 MA11 Kurd MA11



majority of the population are Khanaqin, Kifri, Ibn Sanjaq, Ruwandiz, Aqra, Amadiya, Dohuk and Zakho. Kirkuk city is very mixed but contains a large Kurdish element. The professional and intellectual classes, as well as the larger land-owners, tend, as would be expected, to collect in the towns, and there is always a steady drift of these out of Kurdistan to Baghdad.

The rural element consists for the most part of settled villagers; the nomads, once numerous, now form only a small proportion of the whole. Though not all villagers are in fact tribesmen, the organization of society outside the towns may be said, for all practical purposes, still to be essentially tribal, with groups of villages owing a kind of feudal allegiance to a landlord, a Shaykh of one of the dervish fraternities, or a tribal Agha who may have imposed himself on the village by force. With the progressive consolidation of the authority of the administration, and with the spread of education, the villagers have not unnaturally begun to refuse to submit to the impositions, sanctioned by ancient custom perhaps but not enforceable at law, by which the barons, especially the Aghas having no title to the land, were accustomed to maintain their position. In many parts of the country the old social organization is breaking down.

## II.

The south-western boundary of Iraqi Kurdistan runs for most of its length across the plain. But immediately to the north-east of the line the ground begins to rise, first as a maze of foothill, and then in a series of long, parallel, limestone ridges running from north-east to north-west, each loftier than the last, up to the main chain of Zagros, which over much of its length marks the Persian frontier. In the extreme north-west these ranges merge into the eastern extension of the Taurus system. On the Persian frontier there are many peaks of over 10,000 feet. It follows that there is a great variety of climatic conditions. The country is traversed by three important affluents of the Tigris, the Great Zab from Turkey, and the Little Zab and the Sirwan (Diyala) from Persia.

A railway from Baghdad following closely the line of the old high road through Kifri and Kirkuk to Arbil serves Kurdistan south of the Great Zab; the main line up the right bank of the Tigris links Mosul directly with Baghdad and, as already mentioned, skirts the Kurdish districts of the extreme north-west. Most of the market towns are now accessible by automobile. Transportation in the remoter highlands and between villages is by mule and donkey; oxen are still used by the nomads as beasts of burden.

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MAll Kurd MAll

## *POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF TENANT VILLAGES*

• 631 The political organization of the non-tribal area is generally much simpler, unifying a much smaller group. Immediately above the village level, external administration takes over control. In the village itself, a *kikhe or mukhtar* (mayor, headman) is elected to serve as an intermediary between the people of the village and the authorities. Frequently he is appointed from above rather than freely elected, in an attempt to achieve a balance of power within the village. In the official governmental system, the *kikhe* of the village is the official of the smallest unit. A hierarchy of officers, appointed from above in the bureaucratic system, administers progressively more inclusive orbs, terminating in the bureaucratic head, the *Mutesarrif* of the *Liwa* (governor of the province), directly responsible to the government ministries, and with considerable autonomy. In practice, however, the landowner of the village intervenes at the base of this hierarchy, and the *kikhe* serves as an intermediary between the villagers and the landowner, and has few dealings directly with official administration.

632 631 When left to their own devices, the villagers generally elect to office the older male leader of the largest kinship group. As a consequence of the marriage pattern, such kinship groups tend to separate off as endogamous blocks. But due to the lower frequency of Fah/Da marriage among the non-tribal villagers (see p. 44), these blocks show less organization and unity than the endogamous subsections in the tribal system, and could not properly be called lineages. Furthermore, they tend to be bilateral, in the sense that relationships traced through female links retain some importance. The relative sizes of these bilateral kinship blocks change fairly slowly, so village headmanship, as well as leadership in the kinship groups, tends to follow an apparently hereditary pattern from father to son.

632 "The powers of the kikhe derive, in part, from his powers as the head of such a group, in part from his closer relations with the landowner, and the implicit threat of reporting illegalities (or in fact making false accusations) to him. As the leader of the village,

8: Leach E-5 (1938) 1940 MAII Kurd MAII
Rowanduz

of modern methods of agriculture. The villages as will be seen from Map 2 are situated mostly in the valleys. East of Dergala village practically the whole area is snow bound throughout the winter. Before the war, though the area was nominally under Turkish domination, the local Kurdish leaders maintained practical independence. After the war the area came within the area of the Iraq mandate. The policy adopted by the British administration and the immediate political consequences are described by Say. Crudely summarised it may be said that after some initial mistakes in which the government unfortunately "backed the wrong man" the administration eventually achieved a relative tranquility by paying all the important leaders a substantial salary provided they behaved themselves. The economic consequences of this will be referred to later. Following the abandonment of the mandate, or perhaps earlier, it was decided by the Baghdad authorities to adopt a more positive policy of "pacification". A strategic road was built through the mountains from Erbil to Rowanduz and continued on to the Persian border; a large military barracks was established at Rowanduz with subsidiary police posts at Bapet and Selala. The economic and political consequences of the building of this road have been very great and will be discussed in greater detail later.

To sum up then, the distinguishing characteristics of area A are the poverty of the soil resources; the severity of the winters; the extreme difficulty, until very recently, of any intercommunication between the various villages; and the fact that such "tribal disintegration" as is now found is all of fairly recent origin dating for the most part from the construction of the road and the establishment of permanent police authority in the Bapet valley.

B. Pustkil Area. This area corresponding approximately to the administrative district of Shaqlawa is separated from area A by an almost impassable range of mountains. On the South side on the other hand it merges quite gradually into the plains area C. Geographical considerations therefore are mainly responsible for the fact that the inhabitants of area B, though presumably of identical cultural origins to those of area A, have for many years been in much closer contact with the Arab world and western "sophisticated" influences generally. At the present time the tribes of this area no longer function as political entities, and the whole region is in a very real sense "directly administered" by the police. Say's account (1931) makes it appear that conditions were very similar even at his time though the process of disintegration has doubtless been intensified in the interval. The potential economic resources of the district are probably much greater than for area A both on account of the milder climate and the greater area of cultivable land.

* An account of the construction of this road is given by A.H.Smallian - Road through Kurdistan.

[Rowanduz - - Bapet]